

Message Text

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ACTION ABF-01

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R 221530Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
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AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

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FRANKFURT FOR EDER, GAO

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: AGAO, FR
SUBJECT: GAO STUDY OF INTERNATIONAL URBAN RAILCAR MARKET

REF: (A) PARIS A-199 (APRIL 1976); (B) STATE 203417

1. EMBASSY IS PREPARED TO ASSIST IN PREPARATION OF SUBJECT GAO STUDY. WE WOULD LIKE TO STRESS HOWEVER, IN ORDER TO BE EFFECTIVE THE STUDY WILL REQUIRE CAREFUL PREPARATION AND RESEARCH PRIOR TO VISITING PARIS' POST IS SENDING TO GAO FRANKFURT (ATTN.: J. EDER) VIA APO MATERIAL FROM A MARKET RESEARCH STUDY ENTITLED "AN ANALYSIS OF THE INTERNATIONAL URBAN RAILCAR MARKET" DONE FOR PULLMAN INC. BY GORDIAN ASSOCIATES, INC., 910 17TH STREET, N.W., SUITE 917, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006.

2. FRENCH URBAN RAILCAR EXPORTS, LIKE FRENCH EXPORTS GENERALLY, ENJOY A SPECTRUM OF GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

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PAGE 02 PARIS 27950 221542Z

MECHANISMS ON WHICH THE EMBASSY AND OTHER U.S. AND INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES HAVE REPORTED EXTENSIVELY' (SEE REFTEL. (A), MOST RECENT ANNUAL EXIM BANK REPORT, AND IMF SURVEY FOR FRANCE (VOL. 5 - 1976, P. 194). GAO TEAM SHOULD BE FULLY BRIEFED ON THESE MECHANISMS PRIOR TO PARIS VISIT IN ORDER TO AVOID UNNECESSARY DUPLICATION OF EFFORT AND TO PROVIDE PRIOR EFFECTIVE

FOCUS FOR BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS.

3. FROM REFTEL. (B), EMBASSY CANNOT DETERMINE WHETHER U.S. MANUFACTURER COMPLAINTS ADDRESS GENERAL GOF EXPORT SUPPORT MECHANISMS OR SPECIAL GOF EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF URBAN RAILCARS, OR BOTH. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIPT SUBSTANCE SUCH COMPLAINTS SO THAT WE MIGHT CONSIDER THEM PRIOR TEAM VISIT. THIS APPROACH SHOULD ALSO GREATLY ASSIST IN DETERMINING COMPARABILITY OF USG/GOF TREATMENT SINCE GAO HEADQUARTERS WOULD HAVE SIMULTANEOUS READY ACCESS TO WASHINGTON SOURCES.

4. PARA. 2 REFTEL RECOGNIZES THAT INQUIRY IS VERY SENSITIVE AREA. EMBASSY SERIOUSLY DOUBTS THAT FORMAL GAO INQUIRY WOULD BE BETTER ABLE TO ELICIT IN PARIS DESIRED PROPRIETARY COMMERCIAL INFO THAN MORE DISCREET EMBASSY INQUIRIES ONCE WE KNOW THE SPECIFIC AREAS OF U.S. MANUFACTURER CONCERN IF INDEED DETAILED INFORMATION CAN BE OBTAINED.

5. WE BELIEVE THAT THE DEPARTMENT AND OTHER WASHINGTON AGENCIES ARE AWARE OF ACUTE GOF SENSITIVITY TO ANYTHING THE FRENCH MIGHT CONSTRUE TO BE "EXTRA TERRITORIAL" INVESTIGATION. THUS, WE WOULD NOT WISH TO ATTEMPT TO SCHEDULE GAO VISITS WITH PRIVATE FIRMS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 PARIS 27950 221542Z

WITHOUT HAVING FIRST NOTIFIED THE GOF, WHICH MIGHT WELL OBJECT. IN ANY CASE, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT FRENCH FIRMS (WHICH TRADITIONALLY HAVE VERY CLOSE LIAISON WITH GOF) WILL BE PREPARED TO COOPERATE WITHOUT AT LEAST AN INFORMAL GREEN LIGHT FROM THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT. WHILE GAO STUDY IS ADMITTEDLY OF A DIFFERENT CHARACTER OUR RECENT EXPERIENCE WITH ANTI-DUMPING AND COUNTERVAILING DUTY CASES HAS PROVIDED FRESH EVIDENCE OF FRENCH SENSITIVITY. IN ANY CASE, FRENCH, RATHER THAN BEING PERSUADED, ARE APT TO SEE AS A U.S. GOVERNMENT "THREAT" THE ARGUMENTATION IN REFTEL PARA. 2'

6. THE EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE WASHINGTON COMMENTS ON FOREGOING PRIOR TO SCHEDULING THE GAO TEAM VISIT TO PARIS IF IT IS TO INVOLVE CONTACTS OUTSIDE THE EMBASSY.
HARTMAN

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